

EPA Region 7 Fact Sheet:

Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex Radiation Screening

Bridgeton, Missouri – May 2014

What is EPA Region 7 doing at the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex?

Beginning May 19, 2014, EPA is conducting a thorough and scientific screening of the Bridgeton Municipal Athletic Complex, or BMAC, to check for radiation.

Why is EPA doing this screening?

Recent calls for EPA to check the BMAC for radiation were raised after individuals reported using donated equipment to find radiation in a drainage ditch at the property. Although all of the scientifically validated information known to EPA and the State of Missouri indicates BMAC remains suitable for use, EPA is responding quickly in a measured approach to bring sound science to a situation fueled by speculation.

What does this screening involve?

EPA Region 7 staff, assisted by EPA Region 5 staff, will use radiation detecting instruments, global positioning system (GPS) equipment, and computer software, all loaded into small push-carts or ATVs, to carefully scan the complex for radiation. As the carts or ATVs roll slowly across the surface of the facility, detectors will sense for the presence of gamma radiation. The computer software will help build a map of any detections that are found.

Will EPA Region 7 take any soil samples as part of this screening?

Yes. We intend to collect soil samples at locations where the surface scanning equipment detects radiation at elevated levels. We will also collect several soil samples from other locations throughout the facility to help our scientists understand the levels of naturally-occurring radiation in the soil, so that they can make comparisons with any other detections that are found.

You mean radiation occurs naturally in the soil around here?

Very low levels of radiation occur naturally in soils all across the country. If radiation is detected at BMAC, EPA's scientific screening and lab analysis will help determine if it comes from a natural or non-natural source.

How long will this screening activity take to complete?

Weather permitting, EPA anticipates it may take about a week to complete the survey work on the grounds at BMAC. EPA intends to do this field screening portion of the survey during hours that won't disrupt the normal operation of BMAC. Ball games and other events at the facility should be able to continue as scheduled.

Is it safe to be near the screening equipment while it's running?

The field screening activity at BMAC will not pose a hazard to anyone visiting or using BMAC. EPA respectfully asks that anyone who comes to the facility during the screening please maintain a reasonable distance from the survey crews and their equipment while they are working, so they can complete this survey in a timely manner.

Is it okay to use the facilities at BMAC now?

Based on all of the scientifically validated information presently known to EPA and the State of Missouri, the facilities at BMAC remain suitable for use. EPA recognizes the importance of the community being assured—it's why we're conducting this screening.

When will we have final results of this screening?

When all scientific data is gathered from the field screening portion of the survey, that data—along with soil samples collected from the facility—will be sent to an accredited professional scientific laboratory that supports EPA's sampling and screening activities. Full lab analysis and results of the quality-controlled, quality-assured data should be available after about 30 to 60 days of lab work.

Will the public get to see the final lab results?

Yes. EPA will make the final results available to the public, both online at its website, http://www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/west_lake_landfill/index.htm , and through social and news media.

Is there someone I can contact if I have other questions about the screening?

Yes. Contact EPA Region 7 Community Involvement Coordinator Ben Washburn at 913-551-7364, or email him at washburn.ben@epa.gov